

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1977

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, IS, SY
SUBJECT: SYRIA PROTESTS ALLEGED ISRAELI VIOLATION OF DISENGAGEMENT
AGREEMENT

REF: (A) DAMASCUS 1971, (B) STATE 87478

1. CHARGE MET WITH DEPFONMIN QADDOUR APRIL 8 TO DISCUSS
SYRIAN PRESS REPORTS OF INCIDENT ON GOLAN AND SYRIA'S
OFFICIAL PROTEST TO UNDOF. AFTER CHARGE HAD MADE POINTS PARA
THREE REF B, QADDOUR REPLIED THAT IN SYRIA'S VIEW ISRAEL
WAS THE ONLY POSSIBLE RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR PLANTING THESE
MINES, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THEIR LOCATION BUT ALSO BECAUSE
ISRAEL HAD AN INTEREST IN CREATING A SITUATION OF TENSION.
ISRAEL'S GOAL IN TRYING TO RAISE TENSION WAS TO HAVE AN
EXCUSE TO DELAY ITS WITHDRAWAL IN SOUTH LEBANON.

2. QADDOUR SAID SYRIAN APPRECIATES US CONCERN IN THIS
MATTER AND AGREES THAT ALL EFFORTS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TOWARDS
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SOUTH LEBANON IN ORDER TO RESTORE STABILITY THERE AND BRING
ABOUT RAPID ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. QADDOUR POINTED OUT THAT
SYRIA HAD PUBLICIZED THE ISRAELI PROVOCATION BUT HAD NOT
RESPONDED BY ANY MILITARY ACTION OF ITS OWN SINCE IT WAS
SYRIA'S AIM TO KEEP TENSION DOWN AND THEREBY SECURE EARLY
ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL.

3. AS FOR ISRAELI DEFMIN WEIZMAN'S DENIAL, QADDOUR SAID SYRIA DID NOT EXPECT ISRAEL TO ADMIT RESPONSIBILITY BUT SHE KNEW VERY WELL WHERE IT LAY. HE SAID HE HOPED WE WERE MAKING SOME POINT ABOUT NEED FOR RESTRAINT TO THE ISRAELIS.

4. THROUGHOUT DISCUSSION QADDOUR ADHERED FIRMLY TO OFFICIAL SYRIAN STORY THAT IT WAS ISRAELI PLANTED MINES WHICH HAD EXPLODED. HE DECLINED TO GIVE ANY ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF INCIDENT.

5. COMMENT: HAVING MADE THEIR POINT THAT SITUATION ON GOLAN SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED, SYRIANS NOT LIKELY TO BE PURSUING THIS MATTER MUCH FURTHER. AS STORY IS COMING OUT AROUND TOWN, IT IS MORE OF AN EMBARRASSMENT TO THEM THAN A CREDIT.
PELLETREAU

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